

Quiet, Please, Bombing Going On



— Arthur Hoppe

Washington, August 3

THE Secretary of State held a press conference today to announce America's "eternal friendship" for Monaco, a nation, he said, "whose neutrality and territorial integrity we shall always cherish."

A reporter immediately asked how long we had secretly been bombing Monaco.

"Speaking for the State Department," said the Secretary indignantly, "we are definitely not bombing Monaco." On being pressed, he said that what the Pentagon was doing was its own business.

Washington, August 4—Acting swiftly in the growing Monaco crisis, the Pentagon today issued three statements on the situation. The first flatly denied anyone was bombing Monaco.

An hour later, a Defense Department spokesman clarified this: "If we are bombing Monaco, which we are not," he said, "it has been due solely to pilot error. Our pilots bombing Laos, which we are not bombing either, often become disoriented by their two sets of orders."

By mid-afternoon further clarification became necessary. "The sole reason the bombing of Monaco, which we are not bombing, has been kept secret from Congress and the public is out of respect to the delicate negotiations between the President and Prince Rainier to end the bombing which is not underway."

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Washington, August 5 — The White House firmly denied "any aggressive intent" in secretly bombing Monaco, which was not being bombed. "Our sole thrust at this point in time," said an aide, "is to protect the lives of our boys in nearby Andorra, where we don't have any combat troops either."

Monaco, August 6 — Speaking from the rubble of the Royal Palace, an aide-de-camp confirmed Monaco had been bombed daily for the past six months. He

said Prince Rainier, who has been on an extended vacation with Princess Grace, hadn't wished to complain for fear of hurting the tourist business.

(Figures showed the number of tourists entering Monaco was up 23.4 per cent. Unfortunately, the number of those going home again declined 47.6 per cent.)

Andorra, August 7 — A Government spokesman here confirmed the presence of 23,514 U.S. combat troops. He reported souvenir sales up 85.6 per cent.

The Pentagon angrily denied the U.S. troops engaged in combat in Andorra were combat troops. "They are merely military advisers," it was explained, "who are forced to engage the enemy in hand-to-hand advice."

The White House added that the non-combat troops were fighting the "Basque-Cong" in order to "insure the inalienable right of the democracy-loving Spanish people to choose freely between Generalissimo Franco and Generalissimo Franco."

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Washington, August 8 — An angry Congress voted to cut off all funds, which it didn't know it had appropriated, for bombing Monaco. But the President prevailed on Congress to extend the bombing deadline to August 15.

Monaco, August 9 — The news of the bombing deadline was received here with jubilation. "At last," said a Monegasque cab driver from a culvert, "we are being bombed legally."

Moscow, August 10 — A report in Pravda that the U.S. Secretary of State had pledged "eternal Soviet-American friendship" caused an air raid alert and widespread panic here today.

Washington, August 15 — The public ending of the bombing of Monaco was celebrated in triumph today by Congressional doves and peace leaders across the land.

Monaco, August 16 — The secret bombing of Monaco resumed today.